COOPERATIVE MARKET SERVICE

Vol. 1, No 1 - Consumers' Market Service

RELEASED BY
CONSUMERS' COUNSEL
AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION
Washington, D.C.

[Dec. 1936]

November first estimates of most food and feed crops were slightly better than October first's. Estimates of potato supplies were increased by 10 million bushels; apples, by 3 million bushels; sweetpotatoes, by 1 million bushels. Milk production on November 1 continued at relatively high levels. Production of most crops, however, is still below 1935.

Winter vegetable supplies are expected to be substantially larger than a year ago. This will offset part of the reduction caused by drought. Large acreage increases are reported for early snap beans, carrots, celery, eggplant, green peas, peppers, spinach, tomatoes.

Potato prices appear to have reached their seasonal low. Outlook is for prices to increase until the new crop moves in volume in March. Production of late potatoes is expected to be 38 million bushels below last year's 319 million bushels. Due to crop improvement in October and prospects for a large early crop of potatoes, advance in prices from November to March is not expected to be as large as anticipated earlier. Keeping quality of some of this year's crop is reported as low. Consumers interested in storing potatoes will find it advisable to buy U. S. No. 1 grade.

Low onion prices have resulted from record production in late producing States. About 70 percent of the year's supply of onions comes from the late crop. This year's late crop is expected to be about 2 million (100-lb.) sacks larger than a year ago. Market prices have dropped to about one-half their level of a year ago. Late onion prices usually advance seasonally after October; because of large stocks this year and a large prospective crop from early producing areas, no substantial price rise is expected.

Meat supplies during the remainder of the year are expected to continue fairly large, but prices may advance. Some advances will be the usual seasonal price rise, for lamb reached its seasonal low point early in October, hog prices in late October. Drought-curtailed feed supplies have sent meat animals to market earlier than usual. Consumer incomes, expected to increase through 1937, will tend to act as further price boosting factor.

Supplies of better grade beef cattle are expected to make up a progressively smaller proportion of total cattle slaughter. By early 1937 they will likely be below average. Prices of all grades of cattle are expected to advance with sharpest advances in better grade. Advances in retail prices of fresh hog products may be expected in late November or December, cured hog products in January or February. Supplies of lamb from November through January are expected to be larger than a year ago, but from February through April smaller supplies are in prospect. Price advance in lamb is expected to be sharpest after February.

Butter prices usually advance to their seasonal peak in December. Prices may follow the course taken in 1935 when conditions were similar to the present and, reach their peak in February.

Low turkey prices are in prospect for the holidays. This year's record crop of twenty million turkeys is about one-third larger than a year ago. In early November wholesale dressed turkey prices at New York were 4 to 5 cents a pound cheaper than a year ago. Chicken prices the rest of the year are expected to continue below last year's level with the seasonal low point in November or December.

Egg prices may be expected to move down after November, at which time the seasonal peak usually is reached. Due to high feed costs, egg prices during the winter are expected to be higher than a year ago.

CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Released by Consumers' Counsel Division
Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D. C.

Volume I, No. 2 December 10, 1936

Lower egg prices but rising beef, pork, lamb, butter, and potato prices are in prospect for this winter. Changes in most cases are seasonal, but due to the drought price increases are expected to be larger than usual and the declines smaller than customary. The price boosting effect of the drought on meat animals, especially hogs, will be felt principally after the turn of the year.

Egg prices appear to have reached their seasonal peak in late November and consumers may expect price declines. This decline may be small and prices probably will average higher than last winter.

Prospects for heavy winter egg production are not promising except on the Pacific Coast. November production in the Mid-West was unusually low. Because of the feed situation and the size and condition of Mid-Western farm flocks the seasonal increase in production in this area, due to start shortly, is expected to be moderate. Pacific Coast egg supplies are important during the winter. Production in this area has been heavier than a year ago and this will in part offset the decline in the Mid-West. Due to heavy withdrawals, egg storage holdings on November 1 were 3.8 million cases compared with 4.7 million cases a year ago.

Large poultry supplies are in prospect for Christmas and New Year's Day at prices below a year ago. This year's record turkey crop brought low prices and farmers are believed to have held a larger than usual proportion of their flocks for Christmas marketings. Receipts of fresh-dressed chickens and fowls may decline from November to December, but this difference should be offset by record cold storage stocks.

Record grapefruit production of 27.6 million boxes has caused a 43 percent increase over 1935 in shipments up to November 28. Auction market prices of Florida grapefruit in mid-November were 15 percent below a year ago. Florida shipments are heaviest from January to April. Orange supplies at major markets were also liberal and prices lower than a year ago.

Peak hog slaughter is reached usually in December. Slaughter this December may not be much larger and possibly might be smaller than during November because short corn supplies have sent hogs to slaughter earlier than usual. Low point in the price of hogs appears to have been reached and rising retail fresh pork prices may be expected during the latter part of December. Pork storage holdings usually reach their low in November and December and then start increasing. On November 1, pork holdings of 353 million pounds were 46 percent larger than last year's small supplies and 14 percent below average. Lard stocks of 95 million pounds were 129 percent above small supplies a year ago, 32 percent above average and the third largest November 1 on record. With smaller than usual number of hogs coming to market after the first of the year, there appears to be little chance to increase stocks markedly after this month.

Butter production declined seasonally during November, but was heavier than a year ago. Expected sharp declines in production have not materialized to date, but with pastures gone an irregularly light make of butter is expected after the turn of the year. Decided improvement in the storage situation occurred during November and this should tend to keep prices from advancing too high. November 1 storage stocks were 15 million pounds below a year ago, but on December 1 trade estimates indicate that storage holdings were 16 million pounds larger than last December 1.

Cattle and lamb slaughter during November declined seasonally, but was of record size. Cattle supplies from now on are expected to include a larger proportion of short-fed cattle and supplies of well-finished animals probably will be below average after the turn of the year. Cattle prices should go up this winter with the larger increases in the better grades. December and January grain-fed lamb supplies are expected to be larger than a year ago but prices probably will increase seasonally.

Fall and winter vegetables moved to market during November in much larger quantities than a year ago due to substantial increases in plantings. The following increases in production of fall vegetables over a year ago are expected: snap beans, eggplant, and green peppers -- about 80 percent; celery and spinach -- 20 to 25 percent; carrots -- 37 percent; tomatoes -- 4 percent. The fall vegetable crop is but a small part of yearly vegetable production.

CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

Issued by Consumers' Counsel Division

Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Washington, D.C.

Volume I, No. 3 December 21, 1936

Final 1936 survey of crops harvested confirms earlier reports of heavy drought damage. No general shortage of food supplies appears, despite the fact that production of several important food crops was distinctly less than usual. Smaller supplies have resulted in higher farm prices than a year ago. Farm prices in general are at their highest level since 1929.

Record or close to record orange, lemon and grapefruit production is forecast for 1936-37. This should mean prices for all citrus products lower than last year and the seasonal increase, usually beginning in late January, should not be as marked as in other years.

Current orange crop of 60.9 million boxes is the second largest on record. Production is 8.5 million boxes larger than a year ago and 25 percent above average. About 60 percent of the yearly orange supply comes from California with most of the remainder from Florida. Florida oranges move in largest volume from November through March reaching their peak in December and then declining until the season closes in June. California oranges are available all year round with the heaviest movement from March to July.

Lemon production in the United States is confined to California. The 1936-37 crop is forecast at 8.3 million boxes. This is the second largest lemon crop on record and is over one half million boxes larger than a year ago.

Grapefruit prospects dropped slightly to 27.4 million boxes on December 1 but the crop remains the largest on record and is 9 million boxes larger than a year ago. Grapefruit shipments to mid-December were over 40 percent heavier than a year ago and the industry anticipates continuation of heavy shipments from Florida and Texas from January through March.

Tangerine-orange season is in full swing now. This year's crop of 2.5 million boxes from Florida is the largest on record and about one half million boxes larger than last year. Peak tangerine shipments occur in December but supplies are large in January and February.

Late potato prospects indicate the supply may be 3 million bushels less than earlier estimates. The late crop is now expected to be 277.7 million bushels, which is 40 million bushels below a year ago and the smallest crop since 1926. Wholesale potato prices made slight gains during the last week in November and early December. Due to the short crop and increased consumer incomes potato prices may be expected to move up until the new potato crop starts moving in volume next spring. Wholesale potato prices at New York during the first week in December were about 60 cents a hundred pounds higher than a year ago.

Late cabbage prices appeared to have reached their peak in the latter part of November and prices are expected to decline seasonally. More than seasonal declines may be expected when movement of early cabbage from the southern states, which is now beginning, reaches considerable volume. Early cabbage production in the southern States is expected to be of record size due to large plantings.

Late onion storage holdings on December 1 were reported to be about 15 percent larger than a year ago. This should tend to retard the seasonal price advance that usually occurs during the first quarter of the year. Storage stocks are the main source of onion supplies until new crop onions arrive during the spring months. Wholesale onion prices advanced slightly during November and early December but they were still from 40 to 50 percent below last year's due to the record size of the 1936 late crop. Quality of this year's crop is exceptionally good and this should mean small shrinkage and good keeping quality during the storage period.

First strawberry shipments of the season arrived at markets during December. Strawberry supplies during December and January usually are very light but in February supplies increase sharply with peak movement in May. Acreage planted to strawberries this year is slightly larger than last year's harvested acreage. Carlot shipments are expected to start to market from Florida shortly after Christmas.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION
Washington, D. C.

December 20, 1936

To the Manager:

We are sending you another issue of our CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE which gives latest information from the Department of Agriculture on supplies of food.

This is a new service initiated for cooperative store managers and purchasing agents of buying clubs who handle food products. It is intended to help them in sizing up the market situation.

We shall be glad to list your name to receive this release regularly if it will be of use to you. It appears twice a month. There is no subscription charge.

Information contained in this bulletin is carried more extensively in the CONSUMERS' GUIDE, illustrated biweekly publication of this office. We make special release of this market news so that it can reach cooperative buyers more promptly than is possible through the CONSUMERS' GUIDE. If you are not now receiving the GUIDE and would like to have that mailed to you regularly also, you can make your request on the attached form.

Very truly yours,

D. E. Montgomery
D. E. Montgomery
Consumers' Counsel

Consumers' Counsel,
Agricultural Adjustment Administration,
Washington, D. C.

Please list my name to receive regularly:

☐ CONSUMERS' MARKET SERVICE

☐ CONSUMERS' GUIDE

Name ______________________________
Official Title ______________________________
Name of Organization ______________________________
Your address ______________________________